

Genesis the Church By-Laws Revisions

Bylaws are an organization's operating manual. These rules explain the process for board members, board meeting guidelines and frequency, membership, membership meetings, pastoral requirements and procedures, church discipline and more. The purpose is not to cover every detail of the organization's policies as we have employee handbooks and procedures for these details. The challenge for bylaws is to keep them relevant as times and circumstances change. As these changes happen the governing document should reflect these changes by making amendments. We believe that the amendments listed make long-term sense for the organization and for the community.

The Session went through the By-Laws with some particular changes in mind, but along the way cleaned up some small issues. Here are the key changes that were made to the by-law for our community to review.

Minor Changes:

- Making the letter/numbering system of the outline consistent.
- Article I, II.2.C
 - ◆ Drop Willow Creek Association--doesn't exist anymore
- Article I, IV, B
 - ◆ Dropped having the Pastor as Moderator of the Session to someone selected by the Session.
- Article V, I, A, 1
 - ◆ The Scripture references are noted rather than quoted in full.
- The section on authority of the Elders was moved to Article V. II. B since all the matters dealt with property and finance. Also, given to the entire Session.

Key Changes:

- Article II. II
 - ◆ Major simplification about Covenant Membership. Dropped some of the requirements (baptism is recommended but not required, no annual signed statement), Dropped Discipline of Member with extensive quoting of Scripture passages.
- Article VI. II. A through D
 - ◆ Added a job description for the Pastor as none was in the old by-laws.
- Article XII
 - ◆ The fiscal year is now to be determined by the Session rather than set in the by-laws.
- Article XVIII
 - ◆ Matters related to the Olive Branch have been made more consistent with both our needs and state law as well as to bring the Olive Branch into more connection as a ministry of Genesis.

GENESIS: THE CHURCH
BY-LAWS
Approved by Session 5/9/2024

ARTICLE I
TITLE AND INCORPORATION

I. NAME:

- A. The name of the corporation is Genesis: the Church, formerly known as The First Baptist Church of Royal Oak, a Michigan ecclesiastical corporation. All references herein to the "church" refer to the universal Christian church in general; references to "Genesis: the Church" or the "Church" refer to Genesis: the Church, formerly known as The First Baptist Church of Royal Oak.

II. AUTHORITY:

- A. Genesis: the Church is incorporated under the provisions of Act No. 327 of the Public Acts of Nineteen Hundred Thirty-One (1931), as amended and its purposes and objectives are those outlined in the Articles of Incorporation (Ecclesiastical Corporation) filed with the Michigan Department of Commerce, as amended.
- B. The worship and government of Genesis: the Church shall be per the provisions of the by-laws and the statement of faith.
- C. Genesis: the Church, as determined by the Session affiliates with, but is not directed or governed by, like-minded churches for fellowship and service through membership in organizations such as the American Baptist Churches of Michigan. These affiliations shall continue until such a time as determined by the Session or an affiliated organization deviates from the mission and vision of Genesis: the Church or seeks to exert authority or control over the worship, program, or vision.

III. Statement of Faith

- A. We believe that you matter to God. The same awesome God who created the universe created you and wants to give your life true meaning and purpose. Here are other key elements of what we believe:
- B. We Believe there is only one God, who exists eternally as a Trinity of Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Each member of the Trinity is fully God, yet each is distinct from the other.
- C. We Believe the Bible (both Old and New Testaments) is the Word of God, written by individuals who were inspired by the Holy Spirit to write down what God

wanted to communicate to us.

- D. We Believe Jesus Christ (second person of the Trinity) proclaimed and inaugurated the kingdom of God, was crucified and died on the cross, was resurrected from the dead and ascended to heaven. Someday, he will return to Earth to conclude history and consummate God's kingdom.
- E. We Believe the Holy Spirit (third person of the Trinity) comes to live within a person once they accept God's free gift of salvation. The Spirit gives us power to live as God wants us to live, and gives us spiritual gifts to serve the Church and change the world.
- F. We Believe men and women were created by God to live in relationship with him. Yet, the first humans chose to rebel against God bringing sin into the world. Sin spread like a virus to all humans, separating us from God.
- G. We Believe men and women were created to exist forever. We will either exist eternally separated from God by sin (hell) or in union with God through forgiveness and salvation (heaven).
- H. We Believe Jesus Christ died on the cross to pay for our sins. It is only through faith in Jesus Christ – not by being a good person or doing good deeds – that a person can be restored to a right relationship with God.
- I. We Believe the church is the Body of Christ, made up of those who follow Jesus together in authentic community, relating to God personally and representing God powerfully.

IV. CORE VALUES: We operate with these values to guide and direct us in our life together amid this world:

- A. Everyone is a masterpiece
 - 1. Each person is created in the image of God, and entrusted with creative and spiritual gifts. We are each called upon to make a unique and humble contribution to the body of Christ.
- B. Hearing and doing
 - 1. At the heart of following Jesus is hearing His words and then acting on them. We believe that it is our birthright to hear from our good Father and that life is more adventurous and robust when we say "Yes!" and respond to what we hear.
- C. Authentic community
 - 1. We seek to be a people that God might dwell among; open, honest, accepting, welcoming, and non-judgmental. We recognize that we are better together than apart.

D. All of life is worship

1. God is good. In response to God's faithfulness we are compelled to respond with worship, reverence, and praise in all areas of our lives; in work, play, study, prayer, giving, and service.

E. We are missionaries

1. God is a missionary and invites us to join in His good work. Because of this, we intentionally equip followers of Jesus Christ to participate in God's mission in neighborhoods, networks, and the nations.

F. Love in action

1. God loves people and so we love people. We show God's love in the world through actions born of compassion. Without judgment, we seek to embody the love of Jesus Christ through tangible acts of kindness, care, and service to others.

G. Mending the World

1. God's plan is to mend the broken world through Jesus. We join in God's work to bring justice, reconciliation, mercy, and shalom upon the earth until Jesus returns in ultimate triumph over brokenness.

V. THE SESSION

- A. The Session shall consist of the Elders, the Senior Pastor, and other pastoral staff as determined by the Senior Pastor and Elders.
- B. Each year the Session shall select the person to serve as Moderator.
- C. The Session shall be the governing body over all the affairs and activities of Genesis: the Church, with duties and responsibilities as follows:
 1. The Session is charged with the spiritual oversight of the congregation. The Session shall oversee the membership process. They shall oversee the process of calling the membership to repentance and devotion to Christ. They shall remove from membership those who fail to renew their membership and exclude from membership or office those whose unrepentant choices bring reproach on the name of Christ.
 2. The Session shall have the responsibility to carry out the annual review of each pastor. The Session may delegate to the Senior Pastor the responsibility for the annual reviews of other members of the pastoral staff.
 3. The Session's responsibility is to advise the Senior Pastor on philosophy of ministry and direction of the church. They will also give final approval of these decisions. They will also be responsible to hold the

Senior Pastor accountable to a faithful life and ministry.

4. The Session shall designate the persons who may sign checks in the account of Genesis: the Church.
5. The Session may commission a financial subcommittee for the purpose of advising the Session regarding setting the financial direction of the Church's budget.
6. The Session may make contracts, take by gift, grant, devise or other lawful manner, property, real and personal, and may hold or dispose of, mortgage or convey the same for uses and purpose of Genesis: the Church, provided, however, the Session shall not convey or encumber the church's building or real property upon which it rests without approval by a majority of the membership. The Session may delegate to the financial subcommittee, or such other committee as it deems appropriate, the ability to make contracts consistent with the approved budget of the Church.
7. The Session shall have the authority to charter committees, boards, and task forces in order to assist the Session in executing its duties and responsibilities. These committees, boards, and task forces may be chartered for a specific time period or on a standing basis. The progress of each committee, board, or task force must be reviewed by the Session each year.
8. Except as otherwise limited by these by-laws, the Session shall exercise all powers conferred upon corporations by the laws of the State of Michigan in order to attain these purposes.

D. Session Limitations:

1. For any fiscal year, the Session shall not be competent to authorize expenditures in excess of ten percent (10%) of the annual budget of Genesis: the Church, without authorization by the Membership at an annual or special meeting.
2. No member of the Session shall contract or pay bills that have not first received the approval of the Session at a regular or special meeting, except budget expenditures.

ARTICLE II
MEMBERSHIP

I. COMMUNITY MEMBERSHIP:

- A. Anyone is welcome to be a Community Member of Genesis: the Church through attendance at Church events and association with the Church body. No particular beliefs or commitments are required for Community Membership.

II. COVENANT MEMBERSHIP:

A. Qualifications:

1. The following are requirements to become covenant members of Genesis: the Church. Membership is an acknowledgment that an individual has covenanted together with Genesis: the Church in fulfillment of the vision and purpose of Genesis: the Church as evidenced by:
 - a) A statement of commitment to follow Jesus Christ, perhaps evidenced by baptism.
 - b) Owning our Core Values
2. Statement of covenant membership
 - a) Each covenant member shall sign a statement of commitment to the Genesis Core Values. That statement may be signed at any time. There will also be periodic times for the congregation to reaffirm those Core Values in a worship context.
 - b) In the event membership is terminated, the process for reinstatement shall be the same as the above.

III. Members of the Corporation

- A. All covenant members of the church, as established by official action of the Session, are also members of the corporation. The covenant members of the church are collectively hereafter termed the Membership.
- B. Privileges of Membership
 1. Only members who are at least 18 years of age and who are physically present at a duly called meeting of the church shall be entitled to vote. There should be no proxy or absentee voting. The eligible membership of the church has certain limited areas to exercise a vote.
 2. This congregation functions not as a pure democracy, but as a body under the Lord Jesus Christ at the direction of the Session. Determinations of the internal affairs of this church are ecclesiastical matters and shall be determined exclusively by the church's own rules and procedures. The

Session shall oversee and/or conduct all aspects of the church.

3. Membership in this church does not afford the members with any property, contractual, or civil rights based on principles of democratic government. Although the general public is invited to all of the church's worship services, the church property remains private property. The Session has the authority to suspend or revoke the right of any person, including a member, to enter or remain on church property. If after being notified of such a suspension or revocation, the person enters or remains on the church property, the person may, in the discretion of the pastor, or in his or her absence, an individual designated by the session, be treated as a trespasser.
4. No member shall have the right to inspect or copy any record relating to individual contributions to the church, the list of names and addresses of church members, or the accounting books and financial records of the church.
5. The church may impose a reasonable charge, covering the cost of labor and material, for materials of any documents provided to the member before releasing the copies to the member.

ARTICLE III MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS

- I. Nature:
 - A. All ecclesiastical matters and corporate business of the church shall be conducted jointly in the annual meeting or in any special meeting.
- II. Annual:
 - A. An annual meeting of the Membership shall be held each fiscal year, for the purpose of considering the Church budget and transacting any business that may lawfully come before the meeting. The date of the annual meeting shall be set by the Session.
- III. Special:
 - A. Special congregational meetings may be called by the Session or by petition of 25% of the church members.
 - B. No other business may be considered by the Membership except the business

specified in the call.

IV. Notification:

- A. Public notice of the time of the annual meeting and the time and purpose of all special meetings shall be announced during the two successive Sunday services proceeding the meeting day.

V. Place:

- A. All annual and special meetings shall be held at the then regular place of worship for the church, or at such a place as is designed by the Session.

VI. Quorum:

- A. One-tenth of the membership (or one-fifth of the Membership if the number of members shall be less than 100) shall constitute a quorum at any annual or special meeting. If a quorum were not assembled at the hour appointed, any two members shall be competent to adjourn from time to time, that an opportunity may be given for a quorum to assemble.

VII. Voting:

- A. Those who are eligible to vote at the meeting consist of those persons who are Community or Covenant Members of the congregation and who are present at the meeting, with the exception that changes to the By-Laws may only be voted on by Covenant Members. Voting by proxy is not permitted. Voting by absentee ballot is not permitted, though voting via Zoom or a similar virtual program will be permitted if it is made available and publicized in the meeting notices. The moderator of the meeting may not vote. The votes of the Community Members shall not be binding.

ARTICLE IV

CONDUCT OF MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS

I. Presiding Officer:

- A. The Session shall appoint a member of the Session to preside at annual or special congregational meetings. The appointed moderator shall determine the rules of procedure according to his or her sense of fairness and common sense, giving all members a reasonable opportunity to be heard on the matter. The moderator is

the final authority on questions or procedures, and his or her discretion is final and controlling.

- B. For any meeting under this article, the moderator, in his or her sole discretion, shall have full and unilateral authority to require non-members to leave the meeting room and to order the immediate removal of any member or other person present who is deemed by the moderator to be disruptive to the proceedings by act or presence. The moderator shall have full authority to order the removal of all children (ages to be determined by the moderator) if the moderator determines, in his or her sole discretion) that the circumstances so warrant. If the moderator determines the compliance with his or her order removal is unsatisfactory, the moderator may, in his or her sole discretion, revoke the disruptive person's right to remain on the premises in accordance with these bylaws and treat the person as a trespasser.

II. Secretary:

- A. The Session shall appoint a member of the Session to serve as secretary of any annual or special congregational meetings.

III. Procedure:

- A. All meetings shall be opened and closed with prayer.

ARTICLE V

GOVERNING BODIES BOARDS, OFFICERS, AND TERMS

I. Elders

A. Qualification for Membership

- 1. Any Covenant Member who meets the biblical qualifications for Elder as described in I Timothy 3:2-7; Titus 1:6-9; and 1 Peter 5:1-3, and who is affirmed by the congregation as described below may serve as an Elder.

B. Process for Elder Selection:

- 1. The existing Session shall appoint a nominating committee consisting of at least three Covenant Members, none of whom currently serves as an Elder. Nominating committee members are not eligible to be nominated for Elder.
- 2. The Session will determine the qualifications for Elders and determine questions that should be posed to the candidates.

3. The congregation shall be provided with teaching regarding, or a written description of, the biblical qualifications for and role of Elders based on I Timothy 3:2-7, Titus 1:6-9, and I Peter 5:1-3. With the biblical qualifications in mind, members of the congregation will be given no less than 14 days to submit prayerfully the names of members for consideration as elders.
4. Men or women whose names are submitted shall be so informed, and they shall be urged to engage in self-appraisal and personal evaluation in light of the scriptural qualifications. Any person may withdraw his or her name at that point, if they do not aspire to the position of Elder (I Tim 3:1 Here is a trustworthy saying: Whoever aspires to be an overseer desires a noble task.) or if he/she does not believe he/she adequately meet the qualifications.
5. The nominating committee shall review the names of the nominees, and shall conduct interviews with each nominee. After prayerfully considering each nominee, the nominating committee shall make final recommendations to the Elders. The Elders shall review the nominees and make a final selection.
6. The names of the prospective Elders shall be brought before the members of the church, who will be given no less than 14 days to show cause why any one of the prospective Elders would not be qualified to serve. Consistent with Matthew 18:15-16 *"If your brother or sister sins, go and point out their fault, just between the two of you. If they listen to you, you have won them over"* and Matthew 5:23-24 *"leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to them, then come and offer your gift"*, any member with such "cause" must first express their concern to the prospective Elder and then must also express his/her concern to the board of Elders for consideration.
7. At the end of the set period, the prospective Elders will be presented to the members of the church for affirmation by a majority vote of the members present, and for a service of dedication.
8. The process of selection of new Elders shall take place at least once a year and should be conducted within four months, if possible. If nobody agrees to serve as an Elder, then the same group will continue as long as it meets the required number of members.
9. The number of Elders should generally be 5 to 9.

C. Term

1. Elder terms shall be one (1) year in length.

2. Each currently serving Elder may reaffirm his/her willingness to serve another term following a self-evaluation as described above. Elders willing to serve another term will also be subject to review by other Elders. Any such Elder will be subject to affirmation by the members.
3. No Elder may serve more than six (6) consecutive terms prior, rotating off the Elder board for at least one year, at which time that person would again become eligible to be considered for Elder.
4. If an Elder is unable to complete his or her term, the Elders may, in their discretion, choose to fill the vacancy. A person's leaving the board of Elders would not preclude his or her service as a future Elder, subject to the regular Elder selection process. The Elders may refer to previous nominees to choose a candidate or may re-initiate the whole selection process. The new candidate would be elected by a majority vote of the members at a special meeting called for that purpose.

D. Removal of Elder

1. Elders may be removed from office for conduct inconsistent with the Statement of Faith, Core Values of the Church, or conduct inconsistent with the purpose of the Church as determined by the Session, upon a three-fourths (3/4) majority vote of the remaining members of the Session only after carrying out the guidelines described in Matthew 18 as outlined within Article Two of these bylaws.
2. Should an Elder's membership in the church be terminated under these bylaws, he or she shall be automatically removed as an Elder of the church.

E. Purpose of the Elders

1. The Elders shall assist the pastor, in any such manner as he or she should request, in promoting the spiritual welfare of the church, and conducting the religious services, and in performing all of the work of the church. They should make provision for the observance of the ordinances of the church. They should, if requested by the pastor, consider applications for church membership. They should, in cooperation with the pastor, disperse the benevolence fund. They shall assist the pastor in visitation and all other evangelistic efforts of the church. The elders shall assist the pastor in caring for the administrative needs of the church's various ministries as requested by the pastor. They shall provide the Pastor with the necessary tools and resources to lead the church community and choose a moderator for church meetings if the pastor is unavailable or the office of the pastor is vacant. Upon death, resignation, or dismissal of

the pastor, the Elders may appoint a search committee.

II. Board of Trustees

- A. The members of the Board of Trustees shall be identical to the members of the Session, and each member shall be designated an elder-trustee.
- B. Authority of the Session as the Board of Trustees
 - 1. Following the annual church administration meeting, the Session shall assemble and elect, from their own number, a Chairman, who shall be the vice president of the corporation, a vice-chairman, and a secretary. The board of trustees shall exercise only the following specific powers, upon authorization by a majority vote of the members present duly called church administration meeting:
 - a) To purchase, hold, lease, or otherwise acquire real or personal property on behalf of the church, and take personal property by will, gift, or bequest on behalf of the church.
 - b) To sell, convey, alienate, transfer, lease, assign, exchange, or otherwise dispose of, and to mortgage, pledge, or otherwise encumber the real and personal property church, to borrow money and incur indebtedness for the purpose and the use of the church; to cause to be executed, issued, delivered for the indebtedness, in the name of the church, promissory notes, bonds, debentures, or other evidence of indebtedness; and to secure repayment by deeds of trust, mortgages, pledges.
 - c) To act to exercise all powers necessary for the dissolution of the church Corporation.

III. Church Officers

- A. As an accommodation to legal relationships outside the church, the corporate officers of the church shall be as follows:
 - 1. President – Senior Pastor
 - 2. Secretary – Clerk/Secretary of Session
 - 3. Treasurer – Selected by Session and serving on the Finance Committee if one is established.
- B. Eligibility for Office
 - 1. The church shall not install or retain an officer who fails to adhere to or expresses disagreement with the statement of faith and core values. All church officers must be approved initially and thereafter annually by the Session in order for them to commence or continue in their offices. Only covenant members are eligible for election or appointment to a church

officer position.

C. Terms of Office

1. The term of service for all offices and positions in the church, except a pastor, shall be one (1) year, at the expiration of which the officers may be reelected or reappointed.
2. A vacancy occurring in any office or board, except in the case of the Pastor, may be filled at any regular church administration meeting.
3. All elected appointed officers shall serve in the respective offices until their successors are duly elected or appointed.
4. Members of the Board may be removed from office for nonbiblical conduct as determined by the Session, upon a majority vote of the remaining members of the session only after carrying out the guidelines described in Matthew 18 as outlined within Article Two of these bylaws.

ARTICLE VI
SENIOR PASTOR

I. Qualifications for Senior Pastor

A. The Senior Pastor must meet the same biblical qualifications as those for elders as described in I Timothy 3:2-7, Titus 1:6-9, and I Peter 5:1-3

1. The Senior Pastor must further meet the qualifications determined by the Elders at the time of his or her hiring.

II. The Ministry of the Senior Pastor

A. The Senior Pastor will be responsible to lift up the gospel vision and be the main teacher for the congregation. He or she will oversee the worship and teaching themes, oversee the organization of the church worship services, work with the Elders and serve on the Session, and oversee the delegation of various aspects of this part of the church life to other people, including other pastoral staff.

B. The Senior Pastor will be responsible for staff oversight, coordination, and administrative oversight, including with other pastoral staff. Though many responsibilities will be delegated to other staff, the Senior Pastor will have responsibility for the oversight and direction of the whole staff and congregation.

C. The Senior Pastor will oversee the pastoral care of the people in the congregation, often directly providing such care in our church community.

D. The Senior Pastor shall be the official representative of the church to the larger community beyond the church unless otherwise noted in the by-laws or acted upon by the congregation for specific needs.

III. Process for selecting/hiring the Senior Pastor:

- A. A search committee will be chosen by Elders with input from other members of the pastoral staff. The committee's job will be to find qualified candidates to interview and present a qualified candidate to the active members of the congregation.
 - B. The members must approve of the candidate and his or her terms of call by the affirmative vote of seventy-five percent (75%) of the Covenant Members attending a special meeting of the congregation.
- IV. Termination of the Senior Pastor
- A. Should the Senior Pastor be determined by the Elders, in accordance with biblical standards as laid out in Matthew 18 and other biblical passages, to be involved in and unrepentant of sin which disqualifies him for the role of Senior Pastor, the Elders will address the Senior Pastor according to the guidelines described in Matthew 18 as outlined within Article Two of these bylaws.
 - B. The Elders are authorized to evaluate the Senior Pastor's performance. Should the Elders determine that the Senior Pastor's performance is substandard, they shall provide written notice to the Senior Pastor of the deficiencies and work with the Senior Pastor on a performance improvement plan. Should the Senior Pastor continue to perform at a substandard level, the Elders, following a unanimous vote, may terminate the Senior Pastor's employment.

ARTICLE VII BOARD MEETINGS

- I. Session
 - A. The Session shall meet no less frequently than monthly for the purpose of transacting business that may come before it.
 - B. Additional meetings of the Session may be convened at the request of the moderator or two Elders. Such requests should be communicated to the members of the Session in writing or via electronic communication no less than 5 days ahead of the proposed meeting date.
 - C. A simple majority of the members, plus the moderator, shall constitute a quorum.

ARTICLE VIII INDEMNIFICATION

- I. The church may identify any person who was or is a party or is threatened to be made a

party to any threatened, pending, or completed action, suit, or proceeding, whether civil, criminal administrative, or investigative, including all appeals (other than an action by or in the right of the church) by reason of the fact that the person is or was a Pastor, Session member, officer, employee or agent of the church, against expenses, including attorney's fees, judgments, fines and amounts paid in settlement actually and reasonably incurred by him in connection with the action, suit or proceeding; and if that person acting in good faith and in the manner he reasonably believed to be in or not opposed to the best interests of the church and, with respect to any criminal action proceeding, had no reasonable cause to believe his conduct was unlawful. The termination of any action or proceeding by judgment, order, settlement, or conviction on a plea of nolo contendere or its equivalent shall not of itself, create a presumption that the person did not act in good faith and in a manner that he reasonably believed to be in or not opposed to the best interests of the church and, with respect to any criminal action or proceeding, had no reasonable cause to believe that his or her conduct was unlawful.

To the extent that a Pastor, Session member, officer, employee, or agent has been successful on the merits or otherwise in defense of any action, suit, or proceeding referred to in this Article, or in the defense of any claim, issue, or matter in that action, suit, or proceeding he or she may be indemnified against expenses, including attorney's fees, actually and reasonably incurred by him or her in connection with the action, suit, or proceeding.

Any indemnification made of this Article may be made by the church only as authorized in a specific case on a determination that indemnification of the pastor, session member, officer, employee, or agent is proper in the circumstances because he has met the applicable standard of conduct set forth above. The determination shall be made (a) by a majority vote of the quorum consisting of the session who were not and are not parties to or threatened with the action suit or proceeding; (b) if the described quorum is not attainable or if a majority vote of the quorum of disinterested session members so directs, by independent legal counsel in a written opinion; or (c) by the majority over the members of the church.

ARTICLE IX CONSTRUCTION

- I. References in these by-laws to articles and sections are references to articles and sections of these by-laws unless expressly noted to the contrary or unless the context

clearly requires otherwise.

ARTICLE X
AMENDMENTS

- I. These by-laws may be amended subject to the laws of the State of Michigan at any annual meeting or at a special meeting by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the Covenant Members present at a duly called meeting of the Membership provided that a full reading of the proposed changes or a printed distribution of the same shall have been made in conjunction with the call of the meeting.

ARTICLE XI
REVERSIONARY CLAUSE/DISSOLUTION

- I. In the event of dissolution, in the absence of a merger or other reorganization of the church, following all payment of church financial obligations, liabilities or other debts, all remaining rights, titles, and interest in the assets of Genesis: the Church shall transfer as follows: one-half (50%) to the American Baptist Churches of Michigan, which is an organization qualified as an exempt organization under section 501c(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 as amended, or its assigns; and one-half (50%) to other organizations qualified as exempt organizations under section 501C(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 as amended.

ARTICLE XII
FISCAL YEAR

- I. The fiscal year of Genesis the Church shall be determined by the Session based on church programming and financial accounting needs.

ARTICLE XIII
GIFT DESIGNATIONS ADVISORY ONLY

- I. Any and all gifts or donations to the church are a transfer of a donor's entire interest in the donated property. The member relinquishes all present and future dominion and power over the gift. Genesis the Church may, at its discretion, change the use of gifts by

donors. Designated gifts are received and understood to be advisory only rather than obligatory. That is, the management and use of all designated funds are subject to the exclusive control and discretion of the leadership and specific designations may not be followed.

To ensure that all gifts are effectively used, no gift will be accepted that is unduly restrictive, likely to result in a net loss for the church or designated for a purpose outside of the mission of Genesis the Church. Contributions are received and accepted with the understanding that Genesis the Church assumes complete discretion and direction over the usage of any gift.

ARTICLE XIV PRIVATE INUREMENT

- I. No part of the net earnings of the church shall inure to the benefit of or be distributable to its members, trustees, officers, or other private persons, except that the church shall be authorized and empowered to pay reasonable compensation for the services rendered and to make payments and distributions in furtherance of the purposes set forth Article One Section C.

ARTICLE XV POLITICAL INVOLVEMENT

- I. No substantial part of the activities of the church shall be the carrying on of propaganda or otherwise attempting to influence legislation. The church shall not participate in, or intervene in (including the publishing or distribution of statements) any political campaign on behalf of any candidate for public office.

ARTICLE XVI RACIAL NONDISCRIMINATION

- I. The church shall have a racially nondiscriminatory policy and, therefore, shall not discriminate against members, applicants, students, and others on the basis of race, color, or national or ethnic origin.

ARTICLE XVII
LIMITATION OF ACTIVITIES

- I. Notwithstanding any other provision of these bylaws, the church shall not, except to an insubstantial degree, engage in any activities or exercise any powers that are not in furtherance of the purposes stated in Article One Section C.

ARTICLE XVIII
OLIVE BRANCH

- I. The church believes that it is to provide the community with a Christian-based daycare which is based upon and consistent with Biblical teachings. The church believes that the home and church are responsible before God for providing a Christian education. To this end, the church shall engage in ministries in education in keeping with the following dictates:
 - A. The director of the daycare shall be in agreement with the Genesis Core Values.
 - B. All educational programs or courses of instruction shall be taught and presented in full accord with the Core Values of the church.
 - C. The Session shall assist and advise the director on all matters relating to the daycare. The Session shall act as the school board and shall hear all matters and disputes which may arise out of the daycare and shall advise the director accordingly. The Session may create and recommend to the director school policies for governing the curriculum consistent with the provisions herein.
 - D. The Session shall be the final authority on all matters relating to the ministry of the daycare. The Session shall have the authority to approve or disapprove any decision or recommendation of the Olive Branch Advisory Board on all matters relating to the daycare, including finances.